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Governor Signs Court Fee Increase with More Action to Come *League Legislative Bulletin - March 23, 2026*

As legislative action in the 2025-2026 Legislative Session has come to an end, the attention now turns to the Governor. With over 100 bills ready for action, he has until Thursday, April 9th to either sign bills into law or veto them. Governor Evers has been making steady progress by tackling individual or small groups of bills, but many more are still available. Following [last week's exciting recap](#) of the Senate's final regular session day, we will now discuss the Governor's recent action on two League supported bills followed by an overview of 29 additional bills the League lobbied on that are ready for his action.

Increase to Municipal Court Fees Signed

Wisconsin has 219 municipal courts systems that are an important component of our state's justice system. These courts, which exist in communities large and small throughout the state, resolved 425,000 cases in 2023. By resolving violations of local ordinances, municipal courts provide an efficient community-based approach to resolve lower-level legal issues. Unfortunately, municipal courts of all sizes are struggling to fund their daily operations as fees have not kept pace with the rate of inflation.

That's where [Assembly Bill \(AB\) 443](#) comes in. This legislation, championed by Representative Dean Kaufert (R-Neenah) and Senator Van Wanggaard (R-Racine), proposed an increase to municipal court fees by \$10 from a maximum fee of \$38 to a maximum fee of \$48. This increase is consistent with inflationary pressures since the last increase a decade ago. As with current law, \$5 from each fee is still owed to the state, but this fee was not increased in AB 443. The authors also sought to provide efficiencies to these courts by allowing a municipal *court* to collect the fee. The law previously required the municipal *judge* to collect fees.

On Friday, March 20th, the Governor signed AB 443 into law as [2025 Wisconsin Act 113](#)! The League is incredibly grateful to the authors for their leadership on maintaining the financial viability of municipal courts so they can continue their crucial role in Wisconsin's justice system. We would like to thank Governor Evers for signing this bill into law! This legislation was one of the League's 2026 priorities and we're very happy to see it cross the finish line and become law.

After its signature on March 20th, the new maximum fees became effective upon publication the next day. However, if your municipality is looking to utilize the new fee increases, you may need to act. Please consult with your municipal judge, municipal court clerk, and/or municipal attorney to determine what action is needed locally to adjust your fees. Municipal court fees may be in ordinance, may be adjusted by resolution, or may be changed administratively, depending on how your municipality is structured.

Changes to ATV, UTV, and Snowmobile Statutes

On Friday, the Governor also signed [Senate Bill \(SB\) 331](#) into law as [2025 Wisconsin Act 114](#). This legislation, authored by Senator Marklein (R-Spring Green) and Representative Mursau (R-Crivitz), was supported by the League to make various changes to the ATV, UTV, and snowmobile statutes. Among the changes most notable to municipalities is removing a provision that prohibited local governments from designating routes across bridges over 1,000 feet in length. The new law also defines emergency ATV, UTV, and snowmobile vehicles and creates special carveouts for these vehicles.

As originally proposed, the bill would have allowed local governments to designate ATV, UTV, and snowmobile routes on local state highways if the purpose is to access a local business. In other words, it would have allowed a recreational vehicle operator to diverge from an offroad trail to access a gas station or

restaurant within a couple of blocks of the trail, even if that required traversing a local state highway. Unfortunately, to ensure this bill could become law, this provision had to be removed to satisfy concerns raised by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

Thank you to the authors and Governor for moving this legislation forward!

What League Initiatives are Left for the Governor's Action

There's just 17 days remaining for the Governor to act on bills, and along with a host of other legislation, 29 bills lobbied on by the League are still available for his action. The chart below summarizes those bills.

Brief Bill Description	Bill Number	League Position
Liability protections against enforcement and establishing grant programs to tackle PFAS	ABs 130 and 131	In-Favor
Modifications to the workforce housing loan programs established in the 2025-26 Session	AB 194	In-Favor
Increases the bidding thresholds for most public construction projects to \$50,000	AB 217	In-Favor
Establishes a grant writing assistance grant program for municipalities under 7,500	AB 326	In-Favor
Creates a Workforce Housing TIF structure for high-density single-family developments	SB 480	In-Favor
Provides utility aid payments to local governments for energy storage facilities	SB 556	In-Favor
Establishes a battery stewardship program and prohibits lithium-ion batteries from trash	ABs 713 and 911	In-Favor
Creates a new Neighborhood Improvement District structure for residential development	AB 737	In-Favor
Prohibits recreational drone operators from flying over municipal utility facilities	AB 768	In-Favor
Technical corrections to the electric vehicle charging station law surrounding taxation	SB 96	In-Favor
Revisions to the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to ensure statewide distribution	AB 182	In-Favor
Codifies fatality review team process into law and grants records access and confidentiality	AB 192	In-Favor
Creates a tax credit, which is transferable for municipalities, to perform rail maintenance	AB 219	In-Favor
Increases court fees and addresses certain court costs, primarily as it relates to counties	AB 320	In-Favor

Mirrors a federal tax credit for employer-provided childcare services in Wisconsin	SB 376	In-Favor
Clarifies the applicability of historic tax credits in Wisconsin after federal changes	AB 375	In-Favor
Provides gap financing loans to certain prospective moderate-income homebuyers	AB 454	In-Favor
Allows local government landfills to retain certain tipping fees to address PFAS leachate	AB 605	In-Favor
Codifies the assured wetland delineator program to continue third-party delineations	SB 798	In-Favor
Expands existing protections from threats against healthcare workers to EMTs	AB 905	In-Favor
Addresses how the state (not municipalities) handle holdover appointments beyond a term	AB 248	Neutral
Requires comprehensive plans to address residential density; changes to TIF laws	AB 453	Neutral
Exempts RVs seasonally at campgrounds from property taxes, provides aid payments	SB 576	Neutral
Allows agricultural commodities to be exempt from weight limits on certain state roads	AB 679	Neutral
Prohibits private persons from taking public nuisance actions against certain racetracks	AB 880	Neutral
Requires a referendum every 5 years to create a restricted levy exemption for regional EMS	SB 181	Against
Changes condemnation processes for outdoor advertising signs and restricts ordinances	AB 502	Against

To learn more about any of these pieces of legislation, visit our recent [Summary of League Lobbying Positions](#). The document includes hyperlinks to the enrolled bill language that the Governor will either be signing into law or vetoing in the coming weeks.

Engaging in the Final Stages

If any of these actions are of particular interest to your community, we encourage you to reach out to the Governor and either ask for his support to sign the bill into law or ask for his veto on the legislation. An online form for contacts and a phone number for the Governor's Office may be found [here](#).